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DR. WILLIS G. TUCKER, analyst of drugs, has made his eighth annual report to the State Board of Health of New York. He has collected and analyzed 326 samples of drugs, and pharmaceutical chemicals and preparations. These include acetic acid, calomel, chloroform, ether, glycerine, iodoform, tincture of chloride of iron, lime-water, saffron (*Crocus*), santonine, and sulphur. Forty-three per cent were found of good quality; 13.5 of fair quality; and 24.2 of inferior quality; and 19.3 not as called for, that is to say, substituted articles, as, when saffron (*Crocus*) was asked for, common safflower was sold. Fifty-three samples of stronger ether were examined. Of these, 20 were of good quality, 5 fair, 26 inferior. One sample was spirit of nitrous ether, and another the so-called "concentrated nitrous ether." As Dr. Tucker says, such errors as these are the grossest of blunders, and the consequence of such ignorant or careless sales might be most serious to the purchaser. As stronger ether is used as an anæsthetic, it ought to be of good quality. If the samples examined by Dr. Tucker represent the true condition of affairs throughout the world, it is not surprising that evil results sometimes follow the use of ether as an anæsthetic, as his results show that more than 50 per cent of the ether he tested was of inferior quality. Dr. Tucker expresses the opinion that the work done during the past two years has had a decided effect in improving the quality of the drugs sold throughout the State.

## THE ADIRONDACK FORESTS.

As the majority of persons are interested in the preservation of our forests in the East, the arguments of *Garden and Forest*, in its issue of March 6, in favor of State control, will probably meet with some response. It is hardly likely that the direful picture which the writer of the article would bring before our mental vision will be realized; since the State of New York varies little in its commercial environment from New England, and in New England the tree-covered area has been on the increase for fifty years. So, while the constant change from freshet to drought may never be the fate of northern New York, yet the primeval forests may be gone as a pleasure-ground. The editor of *Garden and Forest* argues as follows:—

The complete destruction of the Adirondack forests is inevitable if existing conditions and methods of treatment are to continue. Unimportant improvements in the details of their management may be made from time to time; such improvements have been made within the last few years, and others are now proposed; but the processes of destruction are much more rapid and extensive than the effect of these comparatively insignificant means of amelioration, and there is at present no reason to expect that any effective provision will be made for the permanent protection of any part of this important region. Nothing can be done, indeed, without a thorough change in the system of control and administration of the forests on the State lands. The methods now pursued interpose no serious check to the influences which will extirpate the woods in a comparatively short time. If the devastation of the region, already far advanced, is completed, centuries of time will be required for any process of restoration.

The destruction of the North Woods will produce a change in the flow of the principal rivers of the State, and in the water-supply of the Erie Canal, which will cause widespread disaster to the interests of the people. There will be uncontrollable freshets at the times of heaviest rainfall, and when the snow melts in the spring; the channels of the rivers will be choked by *débris* brought down from the hills; and in summer, when a full volume of water is most needed, the flow will be insignificant. If this ruin is consummated, it will be a most serious blow to the prosperity of the State and of all classes of its people.

Not less important is the value of the region, in its relation to the health and life of the people of the country, as a place of resort for the inhabitants of the towns, and for all who need the restorative and vitalizing atmosphere and influences of a region of sylvan beauty and peace. As our population becomes more dense, the need and value of wild, rough tracts, incapable of cultivation, will be greatly increased. Beyond the arrangement required for the subsistence and comfort of the multitudes of visitors, no settlement or inhabitation should be permitted in any part of the wilderness. If the forests are destroyed, the entire charm and attractiveness of the region will be eliminated, and a scene of hideous desolation will be substituted which no one will ever wish to look upon.

The only plan by which such injury can be averted, and means provided for the permanent conservation of these invaluable forests, is the acquisition by the State of the entire Adirondack region. While portions of it remain in the hands of private owners, injuries to State lands adjacent to their holdings cannot be prevented. But it would be senseless and wicked to expend the money which would be required for this purpose while the present system of control continues. It has proved entirely inadequate for the protection of the forests on the lands which already belong to the State, and it would be the extreme of folly to acquire property at great cost when there is danger that it might soon be dissipated and destroyed.

Unless a system of permanent control, under competent direction, can be put in operation, the people of New York may as well relinquish all thought of saving the Adirondack forests, and all interest in the subject. There can be no adequate or successful administration of a great forest-preserve while its management is subject to the possibility of frequent change, because it is treated as a portion of the political patronage of the State government. Unless the care of the forests on the State lands can be placed in the hands of men of such known and obvious character and quality